



# THE CRAFTSMAN.

N<sup>o</sup> I. *Monday, December 5. 1726.*

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It is usually expected that Persons, who presume to instruct or entertain the Publick, should give some Account of Themselves, and of those particular Endowments, which qualify them for such an Undertaking. Tho' I am sensible of the Prejudices, which adhere to a known Author, and how personal Defects are apt to interfere with a publick Character; yet I think this Expectation so reasonable in general, that I have determined to place my Name at the Head of this Paper, and design to acquaint the World with some of the most remarkable Particulars of my Life.

I am, by Birth, the second Son of *Abraham D'Anvers*, Esq; a Gentleman of an ancient Family, and no inconsiderable Estate in the North of *England*. I was born in that Year, which is become a remarkable *Æra*, on Account of the *Restoration* of our ancient  
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established Government under King *Charles II.* and the auspicious Birth of his present most excellent Majesty. I received the first Rudiments of my Education, under the famous *Dr. Busby*, at *Westminster School*; from whence I was transplanted to *Christ-Church College* in *Oxford*, where I continued between three and four Years; at the Expiration of which, I was entered of *Gray's Inn*, and applied myself to the Study of the Law. When I was first called to the Bar, I attended very constantly in *Westminster-Hall*, and gained considerable Reputation in my Profession; but my elder Brother dying soon after, by which I came into the Possession of a competent Estate, and having before taken a Disgust to the Chicanry of that Business, and the prevailing Practice of the Courts, I resolved to live a retired Life, and indulge my natural Inclination to the politer Arts. I had, however, been so long accustomed to private Chambers, and a reclusive manner of Life, that I resolved to continue in the same Method; which I have accordingly done ever since in *Gray's Inn*, and was made a Bencher of that venerable Society near twenty Years ago.

As I quitted the long Robe very early, it gave me an Opportunity of furnishing myself with some Degree of Knowledge in most Arts and Professions. I have had Leisure, for these many Years, to make my Observations on Men and Things; to amuse myself with the Writings of ancient and modern Authors; to look into the Constitutions of the most flourishing States in all Ages, and particularly of our own; and have from Time to Time made my Remarks on the several Changes and Revolutions, which have happened, not only in the publick Transactions of Government, but also in the private Opinions of Mankind, and the Conduct of particular Parties; of all which the Reader will be fully apprized in the Course of my future Lucubrations.

What chiefly determined me, at this Time, to appear in such a Manner, is the Usage I have lately received

ceived from a *certain Writer*, who has thought fit to break into the private Concerns of my Family, and publicly expose me to the World, for my good Nature and Indulgence to one of my *Servants*; in which, perhaps, I am not altogether excusable. I am, indeed, somewhat obliged to the Gentleman for the good Character, which he is pleased to give me, as to my natural Disposition; but I think it very hard to see my private Weaknesses, and the Infirmities of old Age set forth to the World in so glaring a manner; for tho' I am ready to allow, that the universal Complaints against *Servants* are too just; that their Corruptions are grown very enormous; and that I may, in particular, have contributed to this publick Evil, by too much Lenity to my *Coachman*, who, has not deserved such Tenderness at my Hands; yet some Allowances ought certainly to be made to a Man in Years; who being naturally fond of Ease, is willing to overlook a thousand little Faults and Impertinences, rather than part with an *old Servant*, who was brought up in his Family from a Child; and for whom he has contracted a sort of natural Affection.

But since the Case of my Man *ROBIN* has been made so publick, as to become the Subject of all Conversation; and my Conduct in that Affair has been much blamed, as setting a bad Example to *other Servants*; I will in a short Time give the Publick an Account of that whole Affair, and of the Motives, which have hitherto induced me to proceed in this gentle Manner with so ungrateful and refractory a Servant. In the mean time, I must acquaint the World, that the Relation, which they have seen of this Affair, in a Letter signed *Will. Johnson*, published in the *Country Gentleman*, is, in several Instances, false and erroneous; particularly at the Conclusion, where it is said, that *Robin* at last fell from his Coach-Box, and broke his Neck; for I do hereby assure the Publick, that there was nothing in that Story, any farther than that he re-

ceived a little Shock one Night, by driving in the Dark, against another Gentleman's Coach; but however he might suffer in his Reputation as to *Coachmanship*, and forfeit the Character of a *skilful* and *sober Driver*; yet he was so far from breaking his Neck, that he drove me but Yesterday to *Hampstead*; and I have been prevail'd on, by the strong Intercession of his Friends, and his own Promises of Amendment, to continue him in my Service this Winter; but if he does not immediately grow better, I am resolv'd, notwithstanding any Importunities whatsoever, to discard him entirely, and give him up to the strictest Severity of the Law.

I have likewise Reason to complain of the *Writer before-mentioned*, for representing me, in that Paper, as a Person of an *indolent Temper*, if by that Phrase he means one, who is unconcern'd for the Welfare of his Fellow-subjects, and the Prosperity of his native Country. I hope a Man may be allowed to live quietly, and indulge the Serenity of his Mind in old Age, without drawing on himself the Imputation of being cold and spiritless; for certainly there is some Difference between being easy and *indolent*; between submitting peaceably to several Things, which a private Man cannot help, and his being perfectly indifferent whether they were better managed, or not. However, the Charge against me is contained in such general Terms, and I am so loth to trust to the Candour of the World for their Construction, that I chuse to interrupt my desirable Tranquility, and enter upon a Scene of Action in my declining Years, rather than lie under the least Suspicion of a *tame and vicious Indolence*.

As it is frequently observed, that those Persons *think most, who speak least*; so perhaps it will hold equally true, that They form the soundest Judgment of what passes in the World, who live most retired from the Bustle of it. As to myself, however inconsiderable I may have been thought for the greatest Part of my Life, I hope to convince the World that I am not so *indolent*  
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and careless a Spectator, as *this Author* is pleased to represent me ; but, on the contrary, that I am as warmly affected with the Interest of my Country, as any Man in it ; and look with equal Concern upon the manifold Vices and Corruptions ; upon that general Prostitution of Principles and Degeneracy of Manners, which have by degrees over-run the whole Kingdom, and put Virtue and Honesty almost quite out of Countenance.

As for the Corruptions of *Servants*, I can look upon them in no other Light than as the natural Consequences of the Corruptions of Those in an higher Sphere. The Morals of the *Master* are generally exhibited to us in the Behaviour of his *Domesticks* ; for which Reason I think it ridiculous to endeavour at a Reformation of them, unless we begin with one amongst our selves. The Effect cannot be removed, whilst the Cause remains. *Let the Ax be laid to the Root of the Tree*, if you would effectually stop the Growth of this Evil ; for it will avail but little to lop off a few superfluous Branches and Excrescencies, when the nobler and vital Parts are so dangerously affected.

It is for this Reason that I have entitled my Paper *The CRAFTSMAN* ; under which general Character I design to lay open the Frauds, Abuses, and secret Iniquities of all Professions ; not excepting those of my own ; which is at present notoriously adulterated with pernicious Mixtures of *Craft*, and several scandalous Prostitutions. The same malignant Contagion has infected the other learned Faculties and polite Professions. It has crept into the Camp as well as the Court ; prevailed in the Church as well as in the State ; has vitiated the Country in the same Manner that it has poisoned the City, and work'd itself into every Part of our Constitution, from the highest Offices of Life, down to the lowest Occupations, in a regular and gradual Descent.

It is my Design, in this Paper, to detect and animadvert upon all these Corruptions, as far as they come within my Knowledge ; to shew how general the Evil

is grown, and how *Craft* predominates in all Professions. But the Myſtery of *State-Craft* abounds with ſuch innumerable Frauds, Proſtitutions, and Enormities in all Shapes, and under all Diſguiſes, that it is an inexhauſtible Fund, an eternal Reſource for Satire and Reprehenſion; ſince from this grand Fountain of Corruption flow all thoſe little Streams and Rivulets, which have ſpread themſelves through every Part of this Kingdom, and debauched all Ranks and Orders of Men. It ſhall therefore be my chief Buſineſs to unravel the dark Secrets of *Political Craft*, and trace it through all its various Windings and intricate Receſſes. I am aware of the Difficulties of this Task, and of the Ridicule which it will draw upon me. I know the fashionable Part of the World, which includes the Vain and Superficial, as well as the Self-intereſted and Corrupt, will call me a doting old Blockhead for making ſuch an Attempt; and impute my Remonſtrances againſt Vice to the Peeviſhneſs and Protervity of Age, which naturally inclines us to be out of Humour with the *preſent Times*, and to extol thoſe which are *paſt*; but as the ſober Part of Mankind will, I doubt not, judge otherwiſe of this Affair; and as I have been in a manner neceſſitated to this Undertaking, by the unkind Treatment of the *Letter-Writer* before-mentioned; ſo I have armed my Mind with ſufficient Reſolution to deſpiſe any Reproaches or perſonal Invectives, which may be thrown upon me, whiſt I am carrying it on.

As I am acknowledged by *this Author* himſelf to be a Gentleman of *great Worth* and *natural Probity*; and the Faults, with which he charges me, being, at the worſt, Faults on the *right Side*, the glorious Errors of too much *Lenity* and *good Nature*; ſo I hope the Reader is inclined to believe that I am not altogether unqualified for this Work; unleſs an honeſt Diſpoſition, join'd with a liberal Education, long Experience, and the Knowledge of Men, as well as of Books, can be ſuppoſed to be no Qualifications. But though I have all  
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